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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/521,195	03/07/2000	Jun-ichi Nezu	06501-057001	9418

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EXAMINER

MERTZ, PREMA MARIA

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1646

DATE MAILED: 02/21/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/521,195

Applicant(s)

Ibaraki et al.

Examiner

Prama Mertz

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on Dec 23, 2002
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7, 27, and 29-34 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above, claim(s) 27 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 5 and 29 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4, 6, 7, and 30-34 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claims are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on is/are a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. .
3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
*See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s). 17, 18 6) ☐ Other:

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DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 8-26 have been canceled in Paper No. 20, 12/23/02, and claim 28 has been canceled previously. Amended claims 1-7 and new claims 29-34 (Paper No. 20, 12/23/02), are under consideration. Pending claim 27 is drawn to a non-elected claim.

2. Receipt of applicant's arguments and amendments filed in Paper No. 20 (12/23/02) is acknowledged.

3. The following previous rejections and objections are withdrawn in light of applicants amendments filed in Paper No. 20, 12/23/02:

- (i) the objection to the title,
- (ii) the rejection of claims 1-7 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph,
- (iii) the rejection of claims 7 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Koepsell et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,063, 623).

4. Applicant's arguments filed in Paper No. 20 (12/23/02), have been fully considered and were deemed persuasive in part. The issues remaining new issues are stated below.

Claim rejections-35 USC § 112, first paragraph

5. Claims 1-4, 6-7, 30-34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph.

This rejection is maintained for reasons of record set forth at pages 3-7 of the previous Office action (Paper No. 20, 12/23/02).

Applicant argues that claim 1 has been amended to recite 76% which is more narrowly drawn and that the claimed polypeptides are limited structurally in that they have a high degree of sequence

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identity with SEQ ID NO:1 or are encoded by a nucleic acid that hybridizes under high stringency conditions to a specific sequence in addition to being limited functionally. However, contrary to Applicants arguments, claims 1-4, 6-7 and 30-34 encompass muteins of the polypeptide of amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1. For all these claimed muteins, the written description is not commensurate in scope with the claims drawn to variants of a polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:1. Furthermore, the issue here is the breadth of the claims in light of the predictability of the art as determined by the number of working examples, the skill level of the artisan and the guidance presented in the instant specification and the prior art of record. This position is consistent with the decisions in In re Fisher, 427 F.2d 833, 166 USPQ 18 (CCPA 1970) and Amgen Inc. V. Chugai Pharmaceuticals Co. Ltd., 13 USPQ2d, 1737 (1990), and In re Wands, 8USPQ2d, 1400 (CAFC 1988) (which has been cited by Applicants. If Applicants will kindly review page 1404 of In re Wands, they will find that the factors to be considered in determining whether a disclosure would require undue experimentation include (1) the quantity of experimentation necessary, (2) the amount of direction or guidance presented, (3) the presence or absence of working examples, (4) the nature of the invention, (5) the state of the prior art, (6) the relative skill of those in the art, (7) the predictability or unpredictability of the art and (8) the breadth of the claims. Applicants arguments that the standard is that of mutating a subject protein and testing to see if it retains the desired biological activity (in this case, cation transporter activity) is a position that has been routinely dismissed by the courts, as shown by the decisions cited above.

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Further, In re Wands determined that the repetition of work which was disclosed in a patent application as producing a composition containing an antibody, which is a naturally-occurring compound, did not constitute undue experimentation even if the antibody produced thereby was not identical to those that were disclosed in that application. The instant claims are not limited to naturally-occurring compounds and the instant specification does not provide a description of a repeatable process of producing a polypeptide whose amino acid sequence deviates from the disclosed sequence by as much as even 95%. To practice the instant invention in a manner consistent with the breadth of the claims would not require just a repetition of the work that is described in the instant application but a substantial inventive contribution on the part of a practitioner which would involve the determination of those amino acid residues of the disclosed naturally-occurring sequence, which are required for functional and structural integrity of the protein. It is this additional characterization of the disclosed protein that is required in order to obtain the functional and structural data needed to permit one to produce a protein which meets both the structural and functional requirements of the instant claims that constitutes undue experimentation.

Furthermore, Applicant is encouraged to review the discussion of 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, in a recent CAFC decision, Genentech, Inc. v. Novo Nordisk, 42 USPQ2d, 100 (CAFC 1997), in which the decisions in In re Fisher, Amgen Inc. V. Chugai Pharmaceuticals Co. Ltd., and In re Wands were considered as the controlling precedents in determining enablement issues where protein and recombinant DNA issues are concerned. These decisions have been relied upon in the instant rejection and by the Court because they show that the judicial interpretation of the first

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paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112 requires that the breadth of claims must be based upon the predictability of the claimed subject matter and not on some standard of trial and error. To argue that one can make material embodiments of the invention and then test for those that work in the manner disclosed or that the instant claims only encompass the working embodiments is judicially unsound. Unless one has a reasonable expectation that any one material embodiment of the claimed invention would be more likely than not to function in the manner disclosed or the instant specification provides sufficient guidance to permit one to identify those embodiments which are more likely to work than not, without actually making and testing them, then the instant application does not support the breadth of the claims. In the instant case it is highly improbable that any protein having 95% or 90% amino acid sequence identity to the disclosed protein will more likely than not perform in the manner disclosed and the instant specification does not provide the guidance needed to predictably alter the sequence with any reasonable expectation that the resulting protein will be a transporter of an organic cation.

With respect to the rejection of the above claims, Applicants argue that the teachings of the present application, especially when taken together with the knowledge of one of ordinary skill in the pertinent art and together with the Bowie et al reference, provides an enabling disclosure for the present claims. However, contrary to Applicants arguments, the issue here is that there is not adequate guidance as to the nature of the transporter analogues or variants that may be constructed, but is merely an invitation to the artisan to use the current invention as a starting point for further experimentation. Furthermore, the claims do not indicate the number of conservative substitutions

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i.e. there is no upper limit to the amount of substitutions. Therefore Applicants have not presented enablement commensurate in scope with the claims.

Claim rejections-35 USC § 112, second paragraph

6. Claims 30, 33-34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 30, 33-34, recite "transporter consensus sequence", which renders the claims indefinite. The metes and bounds of the claims thus cannot be ascertained. It is suggested that the claims be amended to recite the specific transporter consensus sequence as supported by the specification.

Conclusion

Claims 5, 29 are allowable.

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP. § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be

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calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Advisory Information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Prema Mertz whose telephone number is (703) 308-4229. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 7:00AM to 3:30PM (Eastern time).

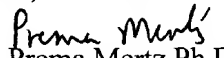
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Yvonne Eyler, can be reached on (703) 308-6564.

Official papers filed by fax should be directed to (703) 305-3014 or (703) 308-4242. Faxed draft or informal communications with the examiner should be directed to (703) 746-5300.

Communications via Internet e-mail regarding this application, other than those under 35 U.S.C. 132 or which otherwise require a signature, may be used by the applicant and should be addressed to [yvonne.eyler@uspto.gov].

All Internet e-mail communications will be made of record in the application file. PTO employees do not engage in Internet communications where there exists a possibility that sensitive information could be identified or exchanged unless the record includes a properly signed express waiver of the confidentiality requirements of 35 U.S.C. 122. This is more clearly set forth in the Interim Internet Usage Policy published in the Official Gazette of the Patent and Trademark Office on February 25, 1997 at 1195 OG 89.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0196.


Prema Mertz Ph.D.
Primary Examiner
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January 8, 2003